

Today's News - Monday, June 29, 2015

- Russell is left none too impressed with the winning design for the Guggenheim Helsinki, "an indistinct jumble of pavilions faced in charred wood. It is extraordinary that a design that triumphed over 1,700 competitors should turn out to be rather ordinary."
- Brown pens an open letter to the Guggenheim Helsinki finalists with the "hope that some of us might grow in the process, or at the very least, avoid undermining each other in the ways that architects too often do. Where does it all end?"
- Blackson is rather cheery about "Modernism's last stand" and its "now marginalized position between the ground floor and roofline - pushed as far away from people as possible."
- Moore x 2: he finds the Serpentine Pavilion to be "as playful a work of art as you could wish to hold a sponsor's party in - it is the work of clever and inventive architects. But it is the sketch of a charming and fascinating building, rather than being one."
- He bemoans that London is now "a city ruled by money - whereby anything distinctive is converted into property value. If London is an enormous party, millions of people are on the wrong side of its velvet rope."
- Pallister begins his series looking into the "mess" that is the U.K.'s housing crisis.
- Meanwhile, British architects are "calling for the government to rewrite planning legislation to stop developers dodging 'affordable' housing commitments" via rather dodgy "financial viability assessments" (if you missed Wainwright's scathing exposé, click "Yesterday's News" - it ran in Thursday's ANN).
- Hume wonders when Torontonians got so "grumpy": "the habit of kvetching has overpowered our collective sense of proportion - the NIMBY impulse, always strong, is out of control."
- Katz, Vey, and Wagner ponder what they've learned in the year since the release of their "The Rise of Innovation Districts" report: "we've gained some important insights into how cities and metros are embracing this new paradigm of economy-shaping, place-making, and network-building."
- Swope offers a fascinating look at the evolution of OpenGov Hub and the four cities about to launch GovCombinator - "co-working on a deadline to create better public policy" ("We're building the plane while we're flying it," sayeth Heller).
- The chairman of Malta's Chamber of Architects weighs in as Malta "appears set to experience 'multiple erections' along the lines of a little New York."
- Brownell gets up close and personal with contemporary architecture in China: the "booming construction market boasts all-star project teams but at times falls short in material execution" (with sad pix to prove it).
- Eye-fuls of Heatherwick's design for the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa to be built within a historic grain silo in Cape Town's V&A Waterfront district.
- Eye-fuls of Hans van Heeswijk Architects' "surprisingly light and airy" Museum MORE in the Netherlands.
- Mori shuffles back to Buffalo to reimagine the Buffalo & Erie County Botanical Gardens.
- RIBA president elect Jane Duncan "explains why all girls should consider a career in her field" (and how it took awhile for her architect/father to come around).
- Weder pens an eloquent tribute to Roger du Toit, who "was bestowed a rare triple official recognition as a professional architect, landscape architect and planner" - and "reshaped Canadian cities."
- Safdie garners the LEAF 2015 Lifetime Achievement of the Year award.
- Call for entries (deadline reminder): 2015 Faith & Form/IFRAA International Awards Program for Religious Art & Architecture.
- One we couldn't resist: #LoveWins - a round-up of "some iconic buildings lit up for past Pride Parades for everybody to enjoy - equally" (cheers for Friday's Supreme Court ruling!).

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[Lacking spark: The design for the \[Guggenheim Helsinki\] fails to excite: The competition was won by an indistinct jumble of pavilions faced in charred wood that reflects all too well the ambiguities of the Guggenheim's intentions...It is extraordinary that a design that triumphed over 1,700 competitors should turn out to be rather ordinary.](#) By James S. Russell – Moreau Kusunoki Architects - The Economist (UK)

[Endgame: An Open Letter to the Guggenheim Helsinki Finalists: Competitions create a culture that devalues our labor...cultivate animosity among colleagues. And...preference spectacle over substantive architectural development...Where does it all end? How much of our careers and lives are we willing to give? How far will we bend for the ever more limited promise of increasingly uncertain rewards?](#) By Marshall Brown - The Architect's Newspaper

["Just Get the Ground Floor Right" ... Modernism's last stand: I find it interesting that modernism has evolved from...its ubiquitous mid-century development standard, to its now marginalized position between the ground floor and roofline...maybe modernist architecture has finally found its appropriate place...within a very narrow range pushed as far away from people as possible.](#) By Howard Blackson/Michael Baker International – Leon Krier - Better! Cities & Towns (formerly New Urban News)

[Serpentine pavilion 2015: So where's the function? ...as playful a work of art as you could wish to hold a sponsor's party in - but as architecture it misses an important point...veers uncertainly between the homemade and the engineered...You can still tell that it is the work of clever and inventive architects...But it is the sketch of a charming and fascinating building, rather than being one.](#) By Rowan Moore – SelgasCano - Observer (UK)

[The city that ate itself: London is a city ruled by money. The things that make it special – the markets, pubs, high streets and communities – are becoming unrecognisable. The city is suffering a form of entropy whereby anything distinctive is converted into property value. Can the capital save itself? If London is an enormous party, millions of people are on the wrong side of its velvet rope.](#) By Rowan Moore - Observer (UK)

[The housing crisis: how did we get here? In the first in a series analysing the nation's housing crisis and examining possible solutions, James Pallister looks at why we are in this mess: How did we get to a position where we are providing so few homes for people, at prices that put them beyond the hope of many?](#) - The Architects' Journal (UK)

[Architects call for NPPF \[National Planning Policy Framework\] reform over 'viability' concerns: Planning system 'unwittingly unleashed industrial-scale affordable housing avoidance': ...calling for the government to rewrite planning legislation to stop developers dodging "affordable" housing commitments. They want to redraft a clause in the National Planning Policy Framework which introduced the concept of financial viability assessments....](#) - BD/Building Design (UK)

[Learning to love Toronto: Our city is lauded around the world, but residents aren't impressed. When did we get so grumpy? ...locals have lapsed into a state of permanent disgruntlement. Our default position is a resounding "No"...Not that Torontonians don't have plenty to complain about...the habit of kvetching has overpowered our collective sense of proportion...the NIMBY impulse, always strong, is out of control.](#) By Christopher Hume - Toronto Star

[One year after: In the year since we released "The Rise of Innovation Districts: A New Geography of Innovation in America" ...we've gained some important insights into how cities and metros are embracing this new paradigm of economy-shaping, place-making, and network-building.](#) By Bruce Katz, Jennifer S. Vey, Julie Wagner - Brookings Institution

[Can co-working on a deadline create better public policy? Four cities across the world are preparing to launch the "GovCombinator." The biggest question is whether \[it\] would really create better public policy...the "unintentional coolness and magic that happens from co-working" suggests it's worth finding out what the answers might be. "We're building the plane](#)

[while we're flying it"... By Christopher Swope -- OpenGov Hub; Nathaniel Heller - CityLab \(formerly The Atlantic Cities\)](#)

[Poised for an architectural revolution: Christopher Mintoff, chairman of the KTP/Kamra Tal-Periti \[Chamber of Architects\], welcomes high-rise development as a challenge to architects, but warns against a short-termist approach...given the enormity of the change that Malta is about to experience, surely people have good reason to be concerned..."perhaps going high-rise will force us to address those issues we have to date ignored." - Malta Today](#)

[Contemporary Architecture in China: Unedited: China's booming construction market boasts all-star project teams but at times falls short in material execution - an issue that isn't always evident until one observes the structures up close. By Blaine Brownell \[images\]- Architect Magazine](#)

[Thomas Heatherwick Designs South Africa's Newest Art Museum: ...Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa \(Zeitz MOCAA\)...set within the confines of a historic grain silo in Cape Town's V&A Waterfront district...Built in the 1920s, the silo was the country's tallest building... \[images\]- Architectural Digest](#)

[Museum MORE: Designed to host the Netherlands' biggest collection of modern realist art, the extension of the former Gorsse's town hall conceived by Hans van Heeswijk Architects features natural materials to create a clear layout and a surprisingly light and airy space. \[images\]- Domus](#)

[Buffalo & Erie County Botanical Gardens embarking on master plan project: New exhibit spaces, café among changes...design team plans to involve the public in the master planning process... -- Toshiko Mori Architect; Oasis Design Group; Arup- Buffalo News](#)

["My dad said architecture wasn't for girls. Boy I proved him wrong": On National Women In Engineering Day, top architect and RIBA president elect Jane Duncan explains why all girls should consider a career in her field.- Telegraph \(UK\)](#)

[Roger du Toit: Urban designer reshaped Canadian cities: ...was bestowed a rare triple official recognition as a professional architect, landscape architect and planner...du Toit Allsopp Hillier \(now DTAH\), improved the look, feel and function of communities across the country. By Adele Weder- Globe and Mail \(Canada\)](#)

[LEAF 2015 Lifetime Achievement of the Year Winner: Moshe Safdie: ...a global architect with a lasting and far-reaching impact.- Arena International](#)

[Call for entries \(deadline reminder\): 2015 Faith & Form/IFRAA International Awards Program for Religious Art & Architecture; deadline: July 15- Faith & Form Magazine / Interfaith Forum on Religion, Art and Architecture \(IFRAA\)](#)

[Beacons of Pride: #LoveWins in These Illuminated Buildings: ...we've rounded up some iconic buildings lit up for past Pride Parades for everybody to enjoy - equally. \[images\]- ArchDaily](#)

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